

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

February 23, 1998 LB 1063

we get a lot of children covered, 24,000 plus, for a very low expense. There are other advantages to the Medicaid program, but let me respond to some of the concerns that Senator Brown expressed about Medicaid. The stigma involved. Well, first off this will be called Kids Connection, and it will be set up to try and diminish the stigma involved with Medicaid. At the same time, Senator Brown was talking about we need to...

SENATOR CROSBY: One minute.

SENATOR WESELY: ...talk about choice. Well, the Medicaid program currently has choice. We have the private health insurance market administering various aspects of the program. So when you come into and qualify for Medicaid, you have a choice of carrier who will provide you your Medicaid coverage, so you have choice and you have the private health insurance market involved in this from the beginning. Then you make your choice and then you are assigned and then you go forward and provide, and provide the coverage. So there isn't a stigma that I can see with the way this is going to be structured. There is a choice involved and the private health insurance market is involved in this, we have far better coverage, far more bang for the buck with this program, and it is clearly the way we should go. I oppose the Brown amendment. We do not need to drop dead after two years and predetermine that we're going to move into the private insurance market as part of this. Let us make that determination in an open manner, considering all of our opportunities, making the best choice possible. I oppose the Brown...

SENATOR CROSBY: Time.

SENATOR WESELY: ...amendment. Thank you.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Before continuing, Senator Schmitt has some guests today under the south balcony, Dixie Drohman, who is his niece, and her family, Junior Drohman and Derrick Drohman. They're from Oak, Nebraska. Would you stand and be welcomed by your Legislature. Thank you for being here. Continuing debate on the Brown amendment, Senator Beutler, followed by Witek, Hartnett, Jensen, Brown, Chris Peterson, and Wesely. Senator Beutler.